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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000241

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/I

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AMED](#) [TBIO](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: MEDICAL SUPPLY BREAKDOWN  
JEOPARDIZES HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

REF: A. 09 BAGHDAD 2530  
[B](#). 09 BAGHDAD 2847  
[C](#). 09 BAGHDAD 3181  
[D](#). BAGHDAD 3387

Classified By: David C. Stewart, PRT Team Leader, for reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#). (U) This is a Salah Ad Din Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

[2](#). (C) SUMMARY. Clinics and hospitals in Salah ad Din are at risk of failing due to a breakdown in the government medical supply system. Some hospitals have begun sending patients to private clinics or pharmacies to purchase medicines that should be available through government channels at no charge. The provincial medical warehouse stands half empty, though shelves should be full. Truck drivers, who have not been paid in months, have stopped deliveries, and large quantities of medical supplies are disappearing into the black market. PRT Staff started to notice the deteriorating situation following the removal of the previous provincial Director General (DG) of Health in June 2009. Political jostling in the run-up to parliamentary elections in Salah ad Din (SaD) has complicated prospects for a solution to these problems. END SUMMARY.

#### GOVERNMENT SYSTEM FAILS TO DELIVER

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[3](#). (C) Kamadia, the company that runs the Ministry of Health (MoH) medical supply system, is faltering in its obligation to deliver medicine to Salah ad Din. Antibiotics, in particular have not been stocked at Kamadia's provincial warehouse since November. Officials with whom we spoke at the Tikrit Teaching Hospital (TTH) recently reported the hospital lacked IV fluid and other supplies; some area hospital and clinic professionals are increasingly telling patients the medications they require are unavailable, forcing patients to purchase these items from private sources instead of obtaining them at no cost from the hospitals. Kamadia's Baghdad warehouse reported it had additional supplies to send to Salah ad Din, but truck drivers are not picking up the shipments for lack of payment. Though there are MoH funds allocated through the provincial DG of Health to pay the drivers, the DG's office has not procured the necessary funding for almost two months.

[4](#). (C) In discussions with the PRT, numerous physicians and medical staff from hospitals and clinics throughout the Tikrit area have alleged that supplies are diverted into the black market. A recent visit to Kamadia's Tikrit warehouse by PRT staff found a large volume of medical supplies sitting on pallets outside, open to the elements. Warehouse staff confided to us that supplies are usually left outside, presumably to be taken away for illegal sale to private pharmacies. Some of these pharmacies reportedly also operate

illegally. The warehouse itself is not held accountable because any supplies left outside are never inventoried. A CERP project supported by a previous BCT funded shelving materials to provide better storage and organization for the warehouse, but much of that shelving unfortunately sits outside, rusting after four months. Prior to the removal of the previous provincial Director General (DG) of Health in June 2009, the PRT did not witness this degree of mishandling. Up until that point, medical supplies were always locked indoors.

#### HEALTH AND PROVINCIAL POLITICS

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¶5. (C) The former DG of Health, Dr. Hassan, was forced out by the Provincial Council (PC) following revelations that the DG had mishandled funds for a hospital cleaning contract. The current interim DG, Dr. Qutaybah Ibrahim al-Jabouri, is a candidate in the upcoming elections and a relative of the Provincial Council Chairman (PCC), Ahmed Abdullah Abid Khalaf, better known as Abu Mazin. The MoH and PC continue to negotiate the naming of a new DG, but the MoH has rejected several candidates put forward by the PC. Part of this problem relates to the ongoing dispute between the former Provincial Governor (PGov), Mutashar Hussein Ilaiwee and Abu Mazin but Baghdad politics is also playing a role (Reftels A-D). When the PC nominates someone, the IIP comes back against the name, insisting that candidates be from the IIP. The PCC would like to nominate the next DG from Tuz, but the IIP refuses to consider non-IIP names.

¶6. (C) While hospitals and clinics face serious shortages of medical supplies, many of their staff are hesitant to

complain. There have been instances in which some hospitals have shuffled their staff to move key professionals to other responsibilities in favor of those who are unlikely to raise concerns about the drastic decline in medical care out of concern for the political ramifications. For those who do complain, there are consequences. TTH's chief surgeon was demoted December 31, two days after he voiced alarm over the state of medical care in the province during a meeting with U.S. Forces.

¶7. (C) Comment: As the health situation in SaD continues to deteriorate, the Provincial Government appears to either stand by and do nothing, or have its hands tied by provincial and national politics. In the meantime, the population suffers. End Comment.

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